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ATLAS Experiment © 2012 CERN

IS the Large Hadron Collider a BIG BANG Machine

Branyon May, Ph.D.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was written by A.P. scientist Dr. May who holds a B.S. degree in Physics from Angelo State University, as well as M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Astrophysics from the University of Alabama.]

In the news, it has been dubbed the "Big Bang Machine" (Boyle, 2008; "Big Bang Machine...", 2010; Than, 2011), but what exactly is the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) and what does it have to do, if anything, with the Big Bang? Constructed by the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) and located along the French-Swiss border, the LHC is the world's largest particle accelerator and has been described as "the largest and most sophisticated scientific instrument ever built" ("CERN Inaugurates...", 2008). Located about 100 meters (330 feet) underground, the LHC can accelerate a beam of protons to 99.99% the speed of light through an ultra-high vacuum beam-pipe connected in a large, circular circuit, almost 27 kilometers (17 miles) in circumference. The enormous magnets that direct the particle beams along their paths are cryogenically cooled to only 1.9 degrees above absolute zero (-271.3 deg C) ("Facts and Figures," 2008). Along the beam's path are four large detectors, of which the ATLAS detector represents the largest particle detector ever built, having a volume of over 28,000 cubic meters (7.4 million

gallons) and weighing some 7,000 tons ("ATLAS—A Toroidal...", 2008).

With regard to its connection to Big Bang cosmology, a CERN press release from September 2, 2003 declared, "By colliding particles at extremely high energies, the LHC should shed light on such questions as...What was the state of matter a few microseconds after the Big Bang?" ("CERN Celebrates Discoveries...", 2003). Three years later in 2006, a similar statement was made in an October press release, that the LHC "possesses enough energy to recreate the first instances of the Big Bang" ("Stephen Hawking Tours...", 2006). Some have even circulated speculations that the LHC will create micro-black holes and recreate the Big Bang, and global news stories seem to insinuate the LHC will solve all the remaining questions concerning how the Universe arose from a Big Bang. In fact, a video titled "Big Bang v2.0," produced with support from the Science and Technology Facilities Council (a national research council in the United Kingdom), introduces the LHC under the auspices of being able to answer science's biggest questions ("Big Bang v2.0," n.d.). The video's introduction displays the following questions: "What is Dark Matter?" "Why do things have mass?" "What happened at the Big Bang?" The next two frames give their reply: "The biggest questions in science will be answered...

by the biggest experiment in history." Yet, can the LHC really give the world what the headlines claim (cf. Miller, 2011a; Miller, 2011b)? It seems that a reality check is badly needed—one that is apart from all the sensational press and flashy media presentations.

GENERATING EXTREME, YET NATURAL CONDITIONS

It is obvious that sensationalism has taken its toll, when on the official LHC Web site under the page titled, "LHC 'Big Questions,'" you find the following question: "I have heard that the LHC will recreate the Big Bang, does that mean it might create another Universe and if so what will happen to our Universe?" ("LHC 'Big Questions,'" 2012a). This question is a logical outcome when considering the common moniker, "The Big Bang Machine," the LHC has been given. The following response to this question, as quoted from the LHC Web site, illuminates several important ideas to put the LHC experiments into proper perspective:

People sometimes refer to recreating the Big Bang, but this is misleading. What they actually mean is:

- **recreating the conditions and energies** that existed shortly after the start of the Big Bang, not the moment at which the Big Bang started,
- **recreating conditions** on a micro scale, not on the same scale as the original Big Bang and,
- **recreating energies that are continually being produced naturally** (by high energy cosmic rays hitting the earth's atmosphere) but at will and inside sophisticated detectors that track what is happening.

No Big Bang—so no possibility of creating a new Universe ("LHC 'Big Questions,'" 2012b).

First, a quick note: although the final sentence declares, "No Big Bang," the author is not implying a denial of the Big Bang Theory, but rather this summarizing statement, taken in context,

is declaring that no experiment will create a Universe, wherein scientists would be able to watch space-time and matter unfold.

Next, notice in the response how it is repeatedly emphasized the experiments performed are attempts at “recreating” a set of energies or conditions thought to have been present shortly after the Big Bang. It is these extreme ranges of parameters that many scientists believe are in some form analogous to conditions shortly **after** the Big Bang. Their goal, therefore, **is not** and **cannot** be to generate, reproduce, or in any way initiate an event similar to what is alleged by the Big Bang Theory. Rather, they simply are generating a certain range of energy conditions. Sadly, their attempts at correcting this misconception are obscured, if not contradicted, even within their own Web site.

The LHC will collide lead nuclei so that they release their constituent quarks in a fleeting ‘**Little Bang**’. This will take us back to the time before these particles formed, recreating the conditions early in the evolution of the universe, when quarks and gluons were free to mix without combining (“LHC ‘Big Questions’,” 2012c, emp. added).

It is not a matter of whether the LHC will create a Big Bang, a “Little Bang,” or a “mini-Big Bang” (Moskvitch, 2010). It cannot generate any “Bang,” as defined within a cosmological origins scenario.

Notice next, the third bulleted statement in the LHC’s response, which states that the conditions produced artificially in the LHC “are continually being produced naturally (by high energy cosmic rays hitting the earth’s atmosphere)...” (“LHC ‘Big Questions’,” 2012b). This simple statement has some profound implications. Especially when it is recognized that the set of conditions and energies to be produced at the LHC have and are being continually produced in nature, and are not a unique characteristic found only in the Big Bang scenario. As the parenthetical phrase

states, nature’s equivalent to the LHC occurs when high-energy cosmic rays collide with Earth’s upper atmosphere.

Cosmic rays are very high-energy, sub-atomic particles that are produced from outside our solar system and within our galaxy. Some of these particles stream into Earth’s atmosphere, colliding with atmospheric particles to produce showers of lower-energy, secondary particles. Many of these cosmic rays are at energies comparable to and greater than the maximum estimated center-of-mass energies of the two counter-rotation proton beams of the LHC. In fact, the approximate rate at which such comparable cosmic rays enter Earth’s atmosphere is an astounding 250,000 particles per second, with over 7.8 trillion events occurring per year (Ellis, et al., 2008, p. 4). Do not let this fact escape notice: although the Big Bang theory requires extremely high-energy conditions in its model, the ability to produce such conditions (or the simple existence of such conditions) does not prove that the Universe came into existence in such a manner. Such conditions are involved in ongoing natural processes, of which scientists presently are deepening their understanding. The

connection between the LHC and the cosmic-ray interactions is much more tangible. Consider the following: (1) the high-energy, cosmic-ray interactions in the atmosphere can be observed, measured, and tested in real-time data; (2) hypotheses can be verified or falsified, then adjusted; (3) subsequent predictions can be made and entire processes from beginning to end can be observed; (4) theories can be updated based on the concrete observations; and (5) results can be applied to the current working knowledge. Yet this connection apparently does not make headlines.

To those who might question the validity of a comparison between the LHC collisions and cosmic-ray events, notice that this same comparison is used as a central argument in a report by the LHC Safety Assessment Group (LSAG), which was tasked by CERN with addressing various safety concerns relating to the LHC experiments. As an overarching argument supporting the LHC as a safe endeavor, the authors drew upon this comparison to show that if Earth, Jupiter, the Sun, and countless stars across the galaxy can survive the enormous number of cosmic-ray collisions in their atmospheres (as evinced by

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their existence today), then the speculations about microscopic black-holes being created, growing, and consuming Earth, are unsubstantiated. The report's abstract stated an important fact: the center-of-mass energies of the LHC collisions are "**less than** those reached in the atmosphere by some of the cosmic rays" (Ellis, et al., p. 1). In summarizing their arguments, the authors state, "Thus, the continued existence of the Earth and other astronomical bodies can be used to constrain or exclude speculations about possible new particles that might be produced by the LHC" (p. 5).

Also consider the following two quotes by Stephen Hawking of Cambridge University and Edward Kolb of the University of Chicago, respectively, who are quoted among many distinguished physicists and cosmologists on the CERN Web site.

The world will not come to an end when the LHC turns on. The LHC is absolutely safe.... Collisions releasing greater energy occur millions of times a day in the earth's atmosphere and nothing terrible happens ("The Safety of the LHC," 2008).

Nature has already done this experiment.... Cosmic rays have hit the moon with more energy and have not produced a black hole that has swallowed up the moon. The universe doesn't go around popping off huge black holes ("The Safety of the LHC," 2008).

Interestingly, a 2003 press release, which announced the upcoming 50th anniversary of CERN, stated: "This new research facility—a 27 kilometre circular particle accelerator—will smash protons and other nuclei together head on, creating conditions that **have not existed since the Big Bang**" ("CERN Prepares....," 2003). Of course, this statement is an obvious contradiction to the previous quotes discussed above. However, can it be explained as accurate to the current knowledge of that time, which has undergone developments since 2003? The answer is no. Although the press release stated that

such conditions had not existed since the Big Bang, a safety report tasked by CERN was published the same year, and referenced how high-energy, cosmic rays represent a close comparison to the particle energies expected in the collisions of the LHC. In fact, the first sentence under the subsection titled "Cosmic Rays" stated, "Cosmic-ray processes reach the energies and energy densities that will be encountered at the LHC and, therefore, they may provide limits on possible disaster scenarios" (Blaziot, et al., 2003, p. 4). The report also referenced peer-reviewed papers from the journals *Reviews of Modern Physics* (Jaffe, et al., 2000) and *Physics Letters B* (Dar, et al., 1999) with similarly-based arguments.

As the experiments are performed at the LHC and the physics of the high-energy collisions are analyzed, the results definitely will contribute to our understanding of matter in extreme conditions. The benefit of the LHC is the high level of control and reproducibility of conditions such as: the total energy of the colliding particles, whether the two beams collide or a beam and stationary target, the number and types of particles involved, and the minimizing of external contaminants. The descriptions and knowledge learned will be broadly applicable whenever those extreme conditions are encountered, **but they do not in any way prove the Big Bang as the origin of the Universe**. Thus, the "Big Bang Machine," constructed to recreate the conditions supposedly found after the Big Bang, actually produces conditions currently observed in cosmic-ray interactions with Earth's upper atmosphere (and with the Moon's surface and the Sun's atmosphere). So a more appropriate name might be "Cosmic-Ray Machine."

ASTOUNDING DESIGN

From the earliest experiments of the composition of the atom, scientists have used particle collisions and the

resulting interactions as a method to discover some of the most fundamental descriptions of matter. In these experiments, the fundamental laws of conservation (conservation of energy, momentum, charge, etc.) are the overarching guiding principles. These laws allow scientists to track the various collision results, knowing that predetermined input parameters (mass, energy, numbers of particles, and/or types of particles) restrict the possible output. Thus, scientists work from the existing input of mass-energy, knowing that the output must be derived from, and cannot exceed, the input into the closed system. Every natural source of energy, from the combustion in car engines to the Sun's light to the spectacular supernovae, are described by the conservation laws of nature. Even the horrifyingly tremendous amount of energy released in a nuclear explosion is subject to the amount of mass-energy initially present. In the LHC, **scientists are not creating matter/energy that was not already present**. Likewise, the same is true for any Big Bang model—matter/energy cannot be created nor destroyed in the physical Universe by natural means (cf. Miller, 2007; Miller, 2010). Thus, from whence did it come?

With some initial "hiccups" (see "CERN Releases....," 2008), the world's largest particle accelerator, the Large Hadron Collider, began full operations in 2009. The enormous structure, complex engineering, precise detectors, extreme conditions, and intricate experiments that have been developed by many thousands of highly intelligent scientists and engineers over many years, are astounding. How is it that such immense intelligence is required in order to try to "recreate" an accidental, chaotic, purpose-less event—the Big Bang? Is this not an incredible contradiction? Yet, such is the sentiment with each press release and news headline that dubs the LHC the "Big Bang Machine." When addressing this very question, "How did our Universe come to be the way it is?," CERN's own
(cont. on p. 45)

Satan is not the Ruler of Hell

Kyle Butt, M.A.

Cartoons have done much to influence the idea that many people have of Satan. The picture of a red, demon-like character with small horns protruding from his head, an arrow-head pointed tail, and a pitchfork in his hand comes to the minds of many when they hear the words devil, Satan, or hell. In fact, many of the cartoons that depict Satan with such images also show him sitting as a king in hell, determining where each person will go and the punishments meted out to those who are lost eternally. This picture could not be further from the truth. And it is because of this errant view that many—maybe even a majority—of those who read Matthew 10:28 misunderstand what Jesus meant.

In the context of Matthew 10, Jesus warned His followers that wicked men would persecute them unjustly. As He sent them out to preach, He admonished them to boldly speak the truth without fearing the repercussions. In the course of His forewarning, He said: “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28; cf. Luke 12:4-5). Many Bible students who have read this verse have incorrectly assumed that Jesus was saying that Satan has the power to destroy the soul and body in hell. They have mistakenly attributed to Satan power that he never has had.

Satan is not the ruler of hell, and he does not have the power or ability to cast or drag anyone into hell. In fact, when we read about Satan’s ultimate end, we see that God is the Being who will cast Satan, also called the devil, into the “lake of fire and brimstone” (Revelation 20:2,10). Furthermore, the apostle Paul explained to the Christians in Rome that no “angels nor principalities nor powers” could separate them from the “love of God which is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:38-39). Those in Rome could choose to reject God of their own free will, but no power in existence, including Satan, could pluck them from God’s hand and cast them into hell.

In truth, God will cast Satan into hell at the end of time in the same way that He will cast all those who have lived unrighteously and rejected Him (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:15). There is no indication in the Bible that suggests that Satan will be “in charge” of hell anymore than any other unfaithful creature of God. He will find no delight in his eternal second death, and he will not enjoy any type of authority or special privileges there. Jesus’ admonition to fear the one who can cast both the soul and the body into hell was designed to encourage His followers to rely on **God**, be strong in the face of persecution, and trust that as long as they are right with God, no force in the spiritual world has the power to harm them.

Q&A

Q: Is Satan real?

A: Several years ago, after teaching a Bible class on the book of Genesis, a long-time Christian indicated to me that he did not believe in the reality of Satan. This gentleman acknowledged the existence of good and evil, but he thought that “Satan” was simply a word used in Scripture to **describe** evil, rather than refer to an **actual** wicked being.

It is true that Satan is evil. (Have you ever

noticed that you cannot spell “devil” without spelling “evil”?) He tempts, deceives, destroys, lies, murders, etc. But, he is not merely a word used by the Holy Spirit and His inspired penmen to symbolize evil; he is, as Jesus and Paul referred to him, “the evil **one**” (Matthew 6:13; 2 Thessalonians 3:3, emp. added). He is not just wickedness; he is “the wicked **one**” (1 John 3:12, emp. added). He does not merely represent dishonesty; “he is a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44).

(cont. on p. 44)





Seize the

Apologetics Press Christian Evidences Camps

What will your children do this summer that will have a positive impact on their souls? What eternally important activities will they be involved in? Will they spend their summer glued to televisions, iPads, video games, and cell phones, or will they take the time to "grow in the grace and knowledge" of God?

Why not encourage your children and the youth of your local congregation to seize the summer and attend one or more of Apologetics Press' soul-strengthening Christian Evidences summer camps, as they fellowship with Christians from around the country?



ICYC Application



BCC Application



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Backwoods Christian Camp (Lineville, AL)*

*"Creation vs. Evolution" (July 29-August 3)
Indian Creek Youth Camp (Oakman, AL)*



Summer!



for this week by going to <http://backwoodschristiancamp.org/wordpress/2011-schedule/>, printing off an application, and mailing it to them.

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The A.P. week at Backwoods costs \$120. (All checks are to be made to BCC). You can register your children

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- "A thousand thanks to...all the members of the A.P. staff who worked diligently to provide an outstanding week [of camp]. My children talked non-stop when they arrived home about their experiences. We will not know the degree of impact on all participants this side of eternity."



Registration is first come, first served. The camps will hold approximately 200 campers.

If you would like to know more about A.P.'s summer camps, please call 334-272-8558.





Although Satan is not deity and in no way has the infinite, eternal attributes of God, **the devil is as real as God**. That is, the same God-inspired book that describes the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, omni-benevolent, glorious Creator, also tells us about a real, fallen spiritual being called Satan. His name appears 14 times in the first two chapters of Job (perhaps the oldest book of the Bible). Scripture reveals that God confronted Satan in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:14-16). Jesus spoke to him in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). And Michael the archangel contended with him about the body of Moses (Jude 9).

Satan is not a fairytale character on par with the Big Bad Wolf or Captain Hook. He is not a little red cartoon figure with horns and a pitchfork who gleefully sits on a throne in hell (see Butt, 2012). The sooner that Christians take seriously “the adversary” (Satan), “the accuser” (devil), who goes “to and fro on the earth...walk-

ing back and forth” (Job 1:7), “like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8), the better prepared we will be to withstand his schemes (Ephesians 6:11) and snares (2 Timothy 2:26). We should neither underestimate him nor overestimate him. He is not deity (and thus not all-powerful or all-knowing), but he is also not a figment of our imagination. Unlike God, he desires all men to be lost (cf. 1 Timothy 2:4). Thankfully, “God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Eric Lyons

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In the News

The Etruscan pygmy shrew is a contender for the smallest mammal in the world. But its diminutive size does not detract from its amazing design. Since this little critter is blind, it must rely on its whiskers to navigate and find food. The whiskers of this tiny shrew are highly sensitive and extremely efficient. In fact, the shrew’s whiskers work so well that researchers have been studying them in an attempt to equip robots with similar technology.

Robotics experts from the Bristol Robotics Laboratory in England have been working on a new machine they call Shrewbot. Shrewbot is a small robot fitted with synthetic whiskers that mimic those of the Etruscan shrew (Moon, 2012). The primary advantage of this “touchy” technology is that the bot does not rely on vision. Researchers suggest that the sense of touch will enable the bot to explore “dark, dangerous or smoke filled environments” (2012).

When scientists copy designs in nature, it is called biomimicry. At Apologetics Press, we



Tiny shrews use their whiskers to locate prey and navigate.

have written several articles about this field of research (see Biomimicry). Each new instance of this practice underscores the intelligent design within the natural world. The implication is simple. If brilliant scientists find complex, proficient designs in nature that

are more efficient than any man-made designs, then the Designer of the natural world must be more intelligent than any human designer. It is ironic that one of the world’s smallest mammals provides such a “big” piece of evidence for the existence of God—the Intelligent Designer.

Kyle Butt

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Web site replies matter-of-factly, “The Universe started with a Big Bang—but we don’t fully understand how or why it developed the way it did” (“LHC ‘Big Questions,’” 2012d). In this statement, no doubt is expressed as to whether the Big Bang event occurred, rather just a casual admission of lacking understanding in the details—including the supposed 13.7 billion years that followed. It would be **unimaginable** to describe the enormous efforts undertaken by those at CERN and the LHC to engineer, construct, and deploy such an amazing technical feat as anything but extraordinary design. It is more unimaginable to attribute anything but **Divine design** to the intricacies, precision, and complexities seen at every scale of the Universe.

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SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

April 8-11	Duck River, TN	(931) 729-4092
April 15	Jasper, AL	(256) 221-2760
April 20-22	Summerville, GA	(706) 857-1752

Eric Lyons

April 1-3	Hayneville, AL	(334) 548-2978
April 27-29	Neosho, MO	(417) 451-2724

Dave Miller

March 31	Fulton, MS	(662) 862-4549
April 13-15	Benton, KY	(270) 527-1271

Jeff Miller

April 5,12	Montgomery, AL	(334) 272-8558
April 19,26	Montgomery, AL	(334) 399-7761

Science: Instituted by God

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

Some contend that science is at odds with religion. They suggest that the scientific method requires empirical testing, but God's existence cannot be empirically verified. Science supposedly proves the Big Bang, evolutionary theory, a very old Universe, and dinosaurs that never co-existed with humans, while the Bible mistakenly contends that the Universe was created in six literal, 24-hour days only a few thousand years ago, with humans and dinosaurs being created together on day six. Supposedly, science is based on verifiable evidence, whereas religion is based on "blind faith" and ambiguous "tinglies" attributed to the Holy Spirit. For such reasons, it is claimed that science and Scripture cannot be harmonized—that they are diametrically opposed to each another.

In reality, however, true science agrees perfectly with Scripture. Though God's existence cannot be empirically verified, it can be easily verified through deductive reasoning from the scientific evidence available to us—in the same way forensic scientists use science to investigate events that they did not personally witness. While atheists have successfully created the mirage that science supports their theories, abundant scientific evidence exists which disproves the Big Bang Theory, evolutionary theory, an old Universe, and proves that dinosaurs and humans co-existed (see www.apologeticspress.org for more information on these matters). And yet, no scientific evidence exists that contradicts the true creation model. Rather, the evidence always supports it. The concept of "blind faith," though championed by many who call themselves Christians, is at odds with Scripture, which defines faith as choosing to believe in something, **based on the evidence that has been presented for it**, and responding accordingly (see Miller, 2003). Atheistic scientists are simply wrong in their sweeping accusation that science and religion are at odds.

Though some theistic beliefs contradict science, when handled accurately

(2 Timothy 2:15), Scripture and science compliment each other perfectly. For instance, science has shown us that matter is not eternal, according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, and could not have spontaneously generated—popping into existence from nothing—according to the First Law of Thermodynamics. This fact indicates that matter must have been placed here by an Entity outside the physical Universe (see Miller, 2007). This truth, arrived at through science and deductive reasoning, is **not in harmony** with atheism and much of today's pseudo-science. But this truth **is** in keeping with the Bible, which says in its very first verse that God—a Being not subject to the laws of nature (i.e., a supernatural Being)—created the heavens and the Earth. Science supports Scripture.

Science has shown us that in nature, life comes only from life and that of its kind, according to the Law of Biogenesis. Again, this fact indicates that a Being outside of nature must exist Who initiated life (see Miller, 2012). This truth, arrived at through science and deductive reasoning, is **not in harmony** with atheism and much of today's pseudoscientific world which must contend, without scientific support, that life popped into existence from non-life. Rather, this truth **is** in keeping with the Bible, which says in Genesis 1:11,24 and 2:7 that God created life.

Science—the Law of Biogenesis and the Laws of Genetics—has shown us that living beings produce other living beings of their own kind (see Thompson, 2002). There may be small changes along the way (e.g., beak size, color, size, etc.), but the offspring of a bird is still a bird. The offspring of a fish is still a fish. Therefore, since there is no common ancestor for all living beings from which all species evolved, there must be a supernatural Being Who initially created various kinds of life on Earth. This truth, arrived at through science and deductive reasoning, is **not in harmony** with the teachings of atheism and

much of today's pseudo-scientific world, which argues against the evidence, that various kinds of living beings can give rise to completely different kinds of living beings. But this truth **is** in keeping with the Bible, which says in Genesis 1:21 and 1:24-25 that God directed living beings to reproduce after their kind.

True science is in harmony with true religion. Why would science lie? It does not have a mind of its own. It has no bias or agenda. It can certainly be misrepresented or its findings misinterpreted, but science is not the enemy of true religion. In fact, according to the Bible, God, Himself, instituted the field of science. When God created human beings on day six and told them to "have dominion" over the Earth and "subdue" it (Genesis 1:28), He was commanding mankind to do something that would require extensive scientific investigation and experimentation. If God founded science, why would science be at odds with religion? When God, through His servant Paul, said in Romans 1:20 that His existence and some of His attributes could be learned from His creation, He was putting His stamp of approval on the scientific study of creation. When He said in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 to "[t]est all things; hold fast what is good," He was essentially summarizing the scientific method. Bottom line: God founded science. When legitimate scientific findings are interpreted properly and fairly, science supports the Bible and Christianity. It certainly is not at odds with the Bible.

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Jesus said: “Do Not Believe Me”

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Most within Christendom see Jesus as One Who expects people to accept Him “by faith.” What they mean by “faith” is that people ought to accept Jesus as the Son of God without any proof, evidence, or rational justification—simply because He **claimed** to be divine. Most, in fact, see faith and proof as opposites. They think one must have faith in those areas where proof is unavailable. To them, “faith” is blindly accepting what you cannot **prove**, and deciding to believe what you cannot **know**.

Tragically, this widespread malady has fomented unbelief, skepticism, and atheism. After all, God created the human mind “in His image” (Genesis 1:26). Hence, the human mind was designed to function rationally. When humans conduct themselves illogically, they are going against their natural inclination. In the face of such irrationality, the atheist rightly dismisses “Christianity” as a false system of thinking. Ironically, the atheist is equally irrational in his blind commitment to atheism and evolution—both of which contradict the evidence. [see www.apologeticspress.org]

True, undenominational, New Testament Christianity, on the other hand, is the one and only consistent, rational perspective. According to the New Testament, God never expects nor requires anyone to accept His Word without adequate proof. God empowered His spokesmen on Earth to verify their verbal pronouncements by performing accompanying supernatural acts (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). The book of John spotlights this feature repeatedly. When Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews, approached Jesus one night, he stated: “Rabbi, we **know** that

You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him” (John 3:2, emp. added). Nicodemus was a rational man! He saw evidence that pointed to the obvious conclusion that Jesus was of divine origin, and was honest enough to admit it.

Responding to critical Jews, Jesus defended His divine identity by directing their attention to the works (i.e., “supernatural actions”) He performed: “[T]he very works that I do bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me” (John 5:36). He made the same point to His apostles on another occasion:

Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, **or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves** (John 14:10-11, emp. added).

Later, Jesus noted that when people refused to believe in Him as the Son of God, they were without excuse, since the evidence of His divine identity had been amply demonstrated: “If I had not done among them **the works which no one else did**, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father” (John 15:24, emp. added). So their lack of faith could not be attributed to their inability to **know the truth** regarding the person of Jesus (cf. John 8:32).

If it is the case that God does not expect a person to believe in Him **unless** adequate evidence has been made available to warrant that conclusion, then we ought to expect to see Jesus urging

people **not to believe** Him **unless** He provided proof for His claims. Do we find Jesus doing so while He was on Earth? Absolutely! This fact is particularly evident in Jesus’ response to the tirade launched against Him by hard-hearted Jews who refused to face the reality of His divinity. He reiterated: “The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me” (John 10:25). His subsequent explicit declaration of His deity incited angry preparations to stone Him. He boldly challenged them: “If I do not do the works of My Father, **do not believe Me**; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him” (John 10:37-38, emp. added).

Since Jesus came to the planet to urge people to render obedient submission to Him (John 3:16; 8:24), it is difficult to envision Him telling people **not** to believe Him. But that is precisely what He did! He has provided the world with adequate evidence for people to distinguish truth from falsehood. We can **know** that God exists, that Jesus is His Son, and that the Bible is the Word of God. If the evidence did not exist to prove these matters, God would not expect anyone to believe; nor would He condemn anyone for failing to believe—since He is fair and just (Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11; Peter 3:9). But the evidence **does** exist! We **can** know! All accountable human beings are under obligation to investigate and find the truth (John 8:32; 6:45; 7:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:21). All who desire to know the truth can find it (Matthew 5:6; 7:7-8). All who fail to do so are “**without excuse**” (Romans 1:20)!

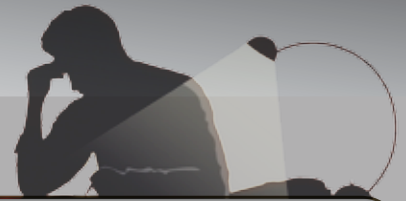
“But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good.”

1 Thessalonians 5:21, NASB



NOTE FROM

The Editor



Summer Camp with Apologetics Press

Last summer, Apologetics Press embarked upon a new venture. We conducted our first A.P. Christian Evidences Summer Youth Camp. We were elated with the results. Over 200 campers and staff workers participated. We are delighted to announce that this summer we will be conducting three camps. In addition to the usual fun and games that go with summer camp (i.e., canoeing, swimming, crafts, sports, etc.), and the devos and Bible studies that nurture the spiritual dimension of young people, campers will be treated to the life-transforming experience associated with studying the proofs for the existence of God and the inspiration of the Bible.

Week one will focus on “Defending the Reliability of the Bible” and is slated for June 10-15 at the Indian Creek Youth Camp in Oakman, Alabama (approximately 40 miles northwest of Birmingham). Week two will deal with “The Existence of God” June 24-29 at Backwoods Christian Camp in Lineville, Alabama (approximately 80 miles east of Birmingham). Week three will center on “Creation vs. Evolution” July 29-August 3, again conducted at Indian Creek Youth Camp.

Teachers for these three weeks of camp include Kyle Butt, Eric Lyons, Jeff Miller, and myself. Several of the speakers for the latter two weeks of camp (on “Creation vs. Evolution” and “The Existence of God”) will be A.P.

scientists, including Dr. Jeff Miller (biomechanical engineer), Dr. Branyon May (astrophysicist), Dr. Joe Deweese (biochemist), Dr. Jerry Fausz (aerospace engineer), and Dr. Mike Houts (nuclear engineer).

The camps are for 3rd-12th graders. The two A.P. weeks at ICYC (June 10-15 and July 29-August 3) cost \$135 each. You can register your children on-line for either of these two weeks at www.icycal.com, or you can print an application from their Web site and mail it to them. (All checks are to be made to ICYC).

The A.P. week at Backwoods costs \$120. You can register your children for this week by going to <http://backwoodschristiancamp.org/wordpress/2011-schedule/>, printing off an application, and mailing it to them. (All checks are to be made to BCC).

Here is a tremendous opportunity to strengthen your children or grandchildren in their spiritual growth, enhancing their prospects of remaining undefiled by the world’s atheistic, evolutionary propaganda. We have a limit of 200 campers per week, so register soon. For more information, call our offices at 334-272-8558.

Dave Miller

See the Center Spread
for More Details